

Our speaker:



We welcome Jennifer Sommerness, EdS. an Independent Educational Consultant at Welcome Spoken Here to our 2014 Educator Conference. Jennifer is an educational consultant, author, teacher and advocate with a background in inclusive education, educational administration, teacher leadership and staff development. She works with teachers, administrators and families to create collaborative school cultures and engaging school experiences for all learners. Through her work she has co-authored several peer-reviewed journal articles, book chapters, curricula, and online class materials on collaboration, co-teaching, teacher leadership, inclusive education, staff development and reflective practices that improve schools. Her work involves creating working teams of parents and educators. Through meaningful professional development and purposeful attention to instructional leadership, she works on creating schools that have the capacity to support the diverse students that attend them, regardless of their disability, using innovative learning strategies for teachers as well as students.

She and her family recently moved to back to Minnesota from the Bay Area of California, where she continues to consult with many local school districts and families. She also maintains a working relationship with many school districts and families in Minnesota, Illinois, Wisconsin, Iowa, New Mexico and New York. Her professional mission is to promote inclusive education of people of all ages with diverse learning needs through development of supportive instructional design, and effective team collaboration. This promotes individuals to be successfully engaged, challenged and respected throughout their various learning and community settings and schools, increasing positive outcomes and independence throughout their lives.

Workshop description

Student Centered Planning and Learning  
Presented by Jennifer Sommerness

In this workshop, the science and art of including students with disabilities will be examined through the lens of student centered planning and learning. Accessing academics to the fullest extent requires intentional collaborative teaming between educators and families; innovative curricular design and support; and specific instructional strategies, tools and curricular adaptations.

Special attention and hands on examples will be given to learn about writing what Jennifer calls a “working IEP”, which are strengths-based and designed specifically for successful use in general education classrooms and environments. In this immediately usable session all of these areas will be outlined and applied, as well as time for learning about fostering natural peer supports and friendships; the effective use of paraprofessionals; and integrating assistive technology through use of an iPad to ignite student participation and provide an outlet for independence. This session will give you hope, direction and inspiration for educational success!

2014 Educator Conference  
November 12th, 2014  
8:00 A.M. — 3:00 P.M.  
Marriott West  
9960 Wayzata Blvd  
Minneapolis, MN 55426

Registration fee \$50 per person  
Registration includes workshop fee, handouts, continental breakfast, lunch and afternoon snack.  
Also included is a certificate of attendance.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_ City, St, Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

County: \_\_\_\_\_ School District: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone:(\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_

I am a (circle all that apply):

Parent   Para Professional   Teacher   SPED Teacher   Therapist

Other: \_\_\_\_\_

I need a gluten free, vegetarian or vegan lunch (please circle)

☐ I am enclosing a \$\_\_\_\_\_ check made payable to DSAM

☐ Please charge \$\_\_\_\_\_ to my Credit Card

Credit card #: \_\_\_\_\_ Exp.: \_\_\_\_\_ Security Code: \_\_\_\_\_

Name on card: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Mail payment and registration form to: DSAM, 656 Transfer Road, St. Paul, MN 55114  
Or register online at: [www.dsamn.org/conferences/educators](http://www.dsamn.org/conferences/educators) using your credit card  
**Questions? Contact DSAM at (651) 603-0720 or (800) 511-3696**



What do others have to say about Jennifer?

Special Education Director

“Jennifer is an asset to our team, helping teachers meet children’s unique needs in as rigorous setting as possible, and she does so with empathy, care and support. She is awesome at teaming, listening and making people comfortable, yet creating possibilities.”

Teacher

“Jennifer Sommerness is a dedicated advocate for children with disabilities and their families. She brings to the table an array of knowledge and dedication to making their educational journey a positive experience.”

Parent

“Jennifer’s expertise and experience changed the trajectory of our daughter’s education. We went from a stormy IEP Team in continuous conflict to a collaborative IEP Team focused not only on our daughter’s educational success, but the staffs’ professional development needs. Transformational.”

Parent

“Jennifer is an educational expert and comes with many years of expertise. She takes the most challenging educational situation that a parent could possible go through, taking every scenario into account, and is able to completely turn the situation around in a welcoming and understanding way. We went from teachers and administrators not seeing or understanding not only the benefits of inclusive education but what they could do as teachers in class to ensure our son was able to

learn in a welcoming environment. She is my true hero!”

Learn more about Jennifer by visiting her website: <http://jennifersommerness.com/>

Down Syndrome Association of Minnesota  
Literacy Initiative

Far too often we are hearing from teachers who are looking for specific, research based programs to teach reading to their students with Down syndrome. Earlier this year, we notified all of you that we were hoping to have Dr. Sue Buckley, an acclaimed international expert in teaching reading to students with Down syndrome, conduct a training session on her program. Dr. Buckley completed a pilot program in a school in Central Texas this past year with very impressive results. Due to a short turn around time, we were not able to work this into Dr. Buckley’s schedule this past summer.

We at the Association continue to pursue this initiative.

Down Syndrome Education’s Reading and Language Intervention for Children with Down Syndrome has been shown, in multiple trials to significantly enhance the reading and language abilities of students with Down syndrome. Importantly, it also provides equal or better results with virtually all students, regardless of ability or developmental delay.

Please take a moment to take a look at the website <http://www.dseinternational.org/en-gb/resources/teaching/rli/> to learn more about the program.

We will be providing updates on this initiative first thing in the morning.

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2014 Educator Conference

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Schedule

8:00-8:30 Check-in and continental breakfast

8:30-9:00 Welcome and program updates  
By Kathleen Forney, Executive Director,  
DSAM

9:00 -12:00 Session I (Break from 10:30-10:45)

Student Centered Planning and Learning  
Presented by Jennifer Sommerness

12:00 - 1:00 Lunch

1:00 - 3:30 Session II (Break from 2:15-2:30)

Student Centered Planning, Cont.

Registration fee \$50 per person

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Who should attend this conference?

- Educational Professionals: Regular or Special Education teachers, paraprofessionals
- Any school service provider who interacts with students with intellectual disabilities.
- Parents

